

CONGREGATIONAL PROFILE

Unitarian Church of Vancouver

VANCOUVER UNITARIANS welcome all delegates, families, church members, youth and friends of Canadian Unitarian congregations and fellowships to the 2007 CUC Annual Conference! Vancouver is a rapidly growing and maturing Pacific Rim city, located at the stunningly beautiful junction of ocean and mountains. The University of British Columbia campus, site of the CUC ACM, offers fine walks, ocean beach access and world-class botanical and Asian gardens. The Chan Centre, one of Vancouver's premier concert halls, is the venue for the Sunday morning worship service. We hope you'll attend the conference and enjoy your stay with us.

The Unitarian Church of Vancouver (UCV) is honoured to serve as this year's CUC ACM "host" congregation. Founded in 1909, the members of UCV have served the Greater Vancouver community through advocacy for spiritual growth, social justice, environmental stewardship, education and a passionate commitment to enhancing and welcoming diversity in our congregation and beyond. Historically, UCV members have been in the vanguard of civic and spiritual life: articulate advocates for church/state separation, women's issues, reproductive rights, sane drug strategies, decent and affordable funeral costs, meaningful inter-faith dialogue, anti-war efforts, gay and lesbian rights... you get the picture. Inspired by the Principles and Sources of our religious and ethical tradition, we've been doing what Canadian Unitarians do; and we're proud of it!

UCV is located at the busy intersection of Oak Street and 49th Avenue; our buildings and grounds have served the congregation and the greater community for over 40 years. Designed by noted Vancouver architect (and UCV member) Wolfgang Gerson, the buildings blend modernist design with West Coast attention to detail for natural light, materials and form. UCV was cited by a panel of architects as one of Vancouver's most



Clockwise from top: *The Choir at the Unitarian Church of Vancouver; These banners have been in many marches over the years—this one was in June at the World Peace Forum in Vancouver; Nicoline Dagenais lights the chalice, with Rev. Dr. Steven Epperson in the pulpit.*

beautiful public landmarks. We value it as a home for worship, learning and celebration.

The 430+ adult members and staff of UCV are deeply committed to the principle and practice of shared ministry. Members of the congregation minister to and care for one another in demonstrable ways. This provides the nurturing that sustains us and allows us individually and collectively to affirm and promote our shared values. We work cooperatively on committees; contribute to shared, lay pastoral care; teach in our religious education program; and engage each other in kindness and friendship. Also, we seek to extend our values beyond the congregation through principled attention and commitment to our families and friends, in our professional lives, and through congregational sponsored street ministry, refugee advocacy, campus outreach and multi-faith work.

Currently, UCV is going through a significant transition. Our parish minister Steven Epperson is a relative newcomer to professional ministry and we have just embarked on a substantially

revised Lifespan Religious Exploration program with a new DRE. Fortunately, we're blessed with a large, dedicated and experienced cohort of senior members. Their mentorship to newer members is crucial for enabling UCV to move into a new era of growth and self-definition. Like most CUC congregations and fellowships, we face challenges in making our financial foundations secure and sustainable for the long haul ahead. As well, the 2007 ACM theme "Diversity in Community," is a challenge and an extraordinary opportunity for us here at home. We are a diverse community in sensibilities and outlook: humanist and pagan; spiritual "seekers"; and ardent advocates for civic and social justice, gay and straight rights, veterans and children alike. As stated in our UCV Mission/Vision Statement: "We are a community of diverse beliefs and shared values." This is our "work" and our strength. "We welcome all who would join this compassionate and visionary community." **U**

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